
The Transition of the Berlin Air Route Traffic Control Center:

A Challenge for Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program and Logistics Management

by

Adolf Burghardt

Many individuals unfamiliar with the security assistance process view Foreign Military Sales as an overly complex, bureaucratic system which is unable (or unwilling) to adapt to the needs of a foreign customer. This misconception is entirely false. The FMS portion of security assistance can be extremely flexible and responsive to our allies' needs. The use of the FMS process during the transition of the Berlin Air Route Traffic Control Center (BARTCC) *is one* example.

Prior to German reunification, BARTCC controlled the airspace above the British, French and American sectors of Berlin as well as the three air-routes connecting Berlin to the West. The airspace surrounding Berlin (including all of the former German Democratic Republic-GDR) was controlled by INTERFLUG's Directorate of Air Traffic Services (ATS), primarily from its facility at Berlin-Schönefeld Airfield.

With the unification of the two German States on October 3, 1990 the German Bundesanstalt für Flugsicherung (BFS) became responsible for all air traffic services in the airspace of Berlin and the former GDR. Unfortunately, BFS did not have the equipment nor the manning to assume control of this greatly expanded airspace region. To solve this problem, BFS (later reorganized and renamed DEUTSCHE FLUGSICHERUNG-DFS) turned to the United States. In particular BFS/DFS requested US Security Assistance in order to help in the integration of INTERFLUG's ATS Directorate into BFS, to provide equipment and manning for the new BARTCC, and through the USAFE manned BARTCC, to provide ATC services for the Berlin region until BFS/DFS could assume autonomous control of this new airspace.

In order to accomplish this mission by December 31, 1994 (the deadline specified under the German Reunification Agreement) a detailed transition plan was required.¹ This detailed transition plan, developed by all key players under guidance of the Secretary of the Air Force/International Affairs Europe (SAF/IAE) and the Air Force Section of the Office of Defense Cooperation/Germany (ODC-AF), had to provide for:

1. Safe, uninterrupted, and efficient operation of Air Traffic Services for the Airports of Berlin and the airspace of the Berlin Flight Information Region.
2. The transfer of responsibility for operation and maintenance of BARTCC from USAFE to BFS/DFS and GAF (for the Acquisition Radar and Logistics Support).

¹ The unification of the two German States is based on the 4 + 2 Agreement.. This agreement required the complete withdrawal of all former Soviet Union (now Russian) Armed Forces by the end of 1994. Allied forces are allowed to remain stationed in Berlin only for the duration of the presence of the former Soviet Union Armed Forces in the territory of the former GDR and Berlin. Beyond that date, foreign armed forces will not be stationed or deployed in that part of Germany. Since USAFE operator support would not be possible after 31 December 1994, the BARTCC transition plan had to be completed within this time limitation.

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 1995		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-1995 to 00-00-1995	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Transition of the Berlin Air Route Traffic Control Center: A Challenge for Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program and Logistics Management			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM),DISAM/DR,2475 K Street,Wright-Patterson AFB,OH,45433-7641			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The DISAM Journal, Summer 1995, Volume 14, Issue 4, p.98-101					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 4	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

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3. The transfer of one functional unit of Schonefeld Approach to BARTCC in the summer of 1992.
 4. The construction of a new Berlin Area Control Center (ACC) at Tempelhof Airport for BFS/DFS by the second half of 1994.
 5. Testing of new ACC equipment/facilities and on-the-job training of new BFS/DFS air traffic controllers leading to the German takeover of the ATC functions in Berlin.

The transition plan was the key to success. Developed jointly by ODC-AF and the German Federal Ministry of Transportation, the BARTCC transition plan established intermediate objectives and milestones, identified FMS program requirements, and assigned responsibilities to the key agencies.

BFS was responsible for the execution of the transition plan and, ultimately, the autonomous operation of BARTCC. The U.S. Department of Defense, on the basis of FMS agreements and the agreed upon transition plan, was responsible for providing services to BARTCC on behalf of the DFS and the GAF. Implementation responsibility rested with the Technical Assistance Field Team (TAFT—a composite group formed in Berlin of U.S. and BFS/DFS personnel) supported by other elements of the USAFE/USAF FMS team—SAF/IAE, the ECES branch of the Air Force Security Assistance Center (AFSAC), and the LHZ branch of the Sacramento Air Logistics Center.

The first Foreign Military Sales agreement between the United States Department of Defense and BFS/DFS (Case GY-D-NKW) provided the mechanism by which the TAFT was funded and enabled the TAFT to provide BFS/DFS with the required services. Initially, FMS case NKW was envisioned to fund the TAFT's services throughout the entire transition phase which was to last until December 31, 1992.

Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that BFS/DFS would not be prepared to operate BARTCC autonomously with its own staff and equipment by the end of 1992. Therefore, the transition period was extended with another FMS Case (GY-D-NLQ) which provided additional USAF assistance until December 31, 1994.

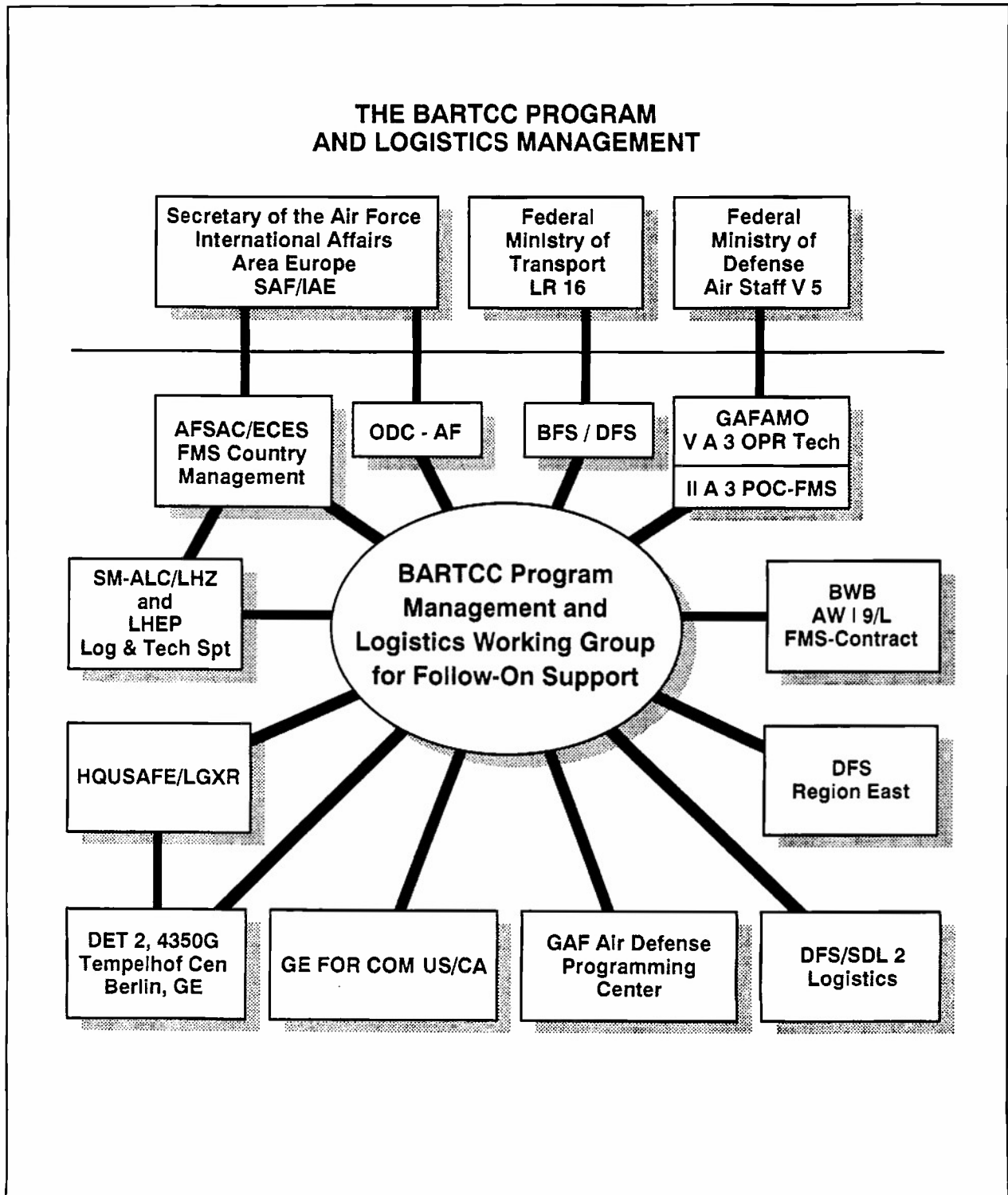
From the beginning of the BARTCC program, Program Management Reviews (PMR) were conducted. The first Program Review (kick-off meeting) was held at the U.S. EMBASSY in Bonn, Germany under the chairmanship of SAF/IAE and arranged by ODC-AF. Extensive coordination was necessary to bring all of the organizations together and to provide a common basis of understanding and methodology by which BARTCC problems and requirements could be identified and addressed (after all, the German Federal Ministry of Transportation had never before operated BARTCC or been confronted with FMS).

The PMR's were loaded with agenda items, not only those related to the case management itself, but also instructional matters for the German civilian partners. The key players in this arena were the members of USAFE 7350th Air Base Group, Berlin Tempelhof, who served as the direct contact to BFS/DFS and at a later point of time to the GAF.

FMS LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT

The logistics part of the transition program had to consider and provide support for all aspects of BARTCC, e.g. radars and equipment, personnel and training, spare parts and publications, maintenance at all levels, configuration management, special tools, ADP environment, infrastructure, and much more. In order to reach the goal of complete transfer by

30 June 1993, the LOGISTICS WORKING GROUP BARTCC for FOLLOW ON SUPPORT (see figure below) was created on 8 May 1992 at the Sacramento Air Logistics Center, CA. The group was formed by the different participating organizations from the US and the German Governments.



Following some very flexible guidelines, FMS case managers, BFS/DFS members, and specialists from all areas frequently developed innovative solutions to make the transition possible. For instance, due to the inherent risks involved in airspace management, BARTCC operations required special logistics support arrangements in order to ensure that safe, uninterrupted operations could be maintained in the Berlin airspace throughout the entire transition period. To accomplish this objective, five special logistics FMS cases were requested by the German Government and developed by FMS case managers in the United States in order to guarantee the necessary follow-on support—especially during emergency operations.

Another example of FMS adaptability and innovativeness involved the actual mechanics of logistics support. The BFS/DFS organization had no Logistics System capable of participating in one of the major USAF logistics support instruments—COOPERATIVE LOGISTICS SUPPLY SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS (CLSSA). Therefore, a special arrangement had to be developed which would allow BARTCC to receive logistics support. Once again, the FMS process was adapted to the situation. In this instance, the German Air Force's Logistics System became the interface mechanism by which BARTCC received its logistics support.

CONCLUSION

On 22 June 1994 the last 36 Operators from the USAFE contingent to BARTCC were released from their tasks in Berlin. At that time, the FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION conducted a small ceremony to thank the USAFE crew for its outstanding contributions during the difficult period of transition and reunification. What was left unsaid, but not unnoticed, was the important part that FMS had played throughout this time period.

The challenge was and still is on our side. The complicated BARTCC transition to the GERMAN CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION was made possible only with the aid of a responsive and flexible FMS system, a system that still provides logistics support to airspace operation in Berlin.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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